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In the Heart of Virginia's Dark Tobacco Belt
Appomattox, Virginia

VIRGINIA PRESS ASSOCIATION

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CHRISTMAS, 1955

Christmas Day, and the Christmas season, always bring back the sweetest memories of our childhood and impress upon us the high principles of our Christmas heritage. For the youngsters, Christmas has a sparkle and a sweetness unsurpassed by any other time of the year. For the adults, Christmas means the spirit of unselfish giving to others.

There is hardly a family in our land which cannot vividly remember happy scenes, perhaps with those now passed on, around the Christmas tree on Christmas morning, and the emptying of stockings. We celebrate this day as the most important holiday in the Christian year in a combination of ways and customs, originating in many various countries.

The date for the observance of Christmas has never been generally agreed upon and, although we observe the 25th of December as the birthday anniversary of Jesus Christ, it is still a disputed point. January 6th was observed by the Christians in Palestine, and Egyptian theologians fixed the date in May—on the 20th. Other faiths have observed April 19 and 20. Some scholars contend that December 25th is about as far away from the actual date as it is possible to get.

Christmas, 1955, finds us in a period of record prosperity, with no shooting war in progress and with a bright future ahead of us. Certainly, we are able to afford the luxury and wealth of unselfishness more than any other people.

Our customs of observing Christmas come from many areas of the world. The idea of the Christmas tree itself came from Germany, in more recent times, but there are those who say that the Christmas tree originated, even before that, in Egypt and in Italy. The belief in Santa Claus also came from Germany, where the first Santa Claus was supposedly one who gave three young women, without suitors, bags of gold—after which they were quickly and happily married.

The legend about the chimney, down which Santa Claus descends and ascends, comes from the Norsemen. The custom of using fireworks at Christmas time, so widely followed in the South, comes from the Latin countries—from Spain, Italy and France. They were introduced into this country by French immigrants around New Orleans.

Christmas in the United States is a universal holiday, made up of the customs from many lands and accepted by the American people generally. That is the way it should be, in our country of free men, who originally came from many lands.

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AN INSPIRING STORY

Bernard Dubin, store-manager of the General Novetly Company in Philadelphia, found himself trying to find a game, among the merchandise in his store, for two blind customers. That was several years ago.

Dubin was first attracted to the two strangers in his store, when they knocked something off the shelves. When he rushed over to reprimand them, he noticed the men were blind. The two men said they were looking for a game they could play.

Dubin, to his dismay, found that he had no games that blind people could play. There and then he decided he would do something about it, and, since that time, he has.

Dubin has learned Braille and has begun to manufacture games. His knowledge of Braille helps him to make games that blind people can play, and, with the help of his two sons, Jerry, 15, and Melvin, 9, he manufactures them in the basement of his home, or the cellar of the store in which he works.

Some of these games are given to hospitals, schools and homes for the aged. One of the games Dubin and his sons have perfected for the blind is Scrabble. By using strips of wood over the top of a huge board, the squares are made "visible" to the blind. Raised letters are used to make the squares readable.

It is estimated that the Dubins have made or adapted some thirty games for the blind. We can think of few pursuits which would be more rewarding or more commendable. Dubin says he is hoping that game manufacturers will "steal" his ideas and put games on the market—since there are so many blind people who need them. He has given away most of his games.

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CONSERVE THE FORESTS

The observance of Conservation Week, this month, focused attention on the great wealth in natural resources all Americans enjoy. The best part about these natural resources is that wise planning and conservation will protect this wealth and preserve our forests.

We have pointed out before that unwise cutting practices, plus carelessness in the woods by hunters and picnickers, annually run the total waste in our forests into the millions of dollars.

Many of the larger paper companies and a growing number of lumber companies, are now carrying out restocking practices and planting two trees for each tree they cut. In this way, several decades hence the country might have as much, or more, timber than it has today.

Such conservation practices have long been followed in several European countries, where the people are very proud of thir forests, and where they are protected very carefully. The United States is no longer a nation of such unlimited natural resource wealth that such practices can be disregarded.

We hope those who cut Christmas trees for American families this year observed these conservation practices and saw to it that woods decimated while acquiring trees for the American Christmas market were adequately replanted at the same time the trees were cut.

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THE INCREASE OF HUNTERS

In practically all the states of the nation, the real hunting season is now underway. We mean by that, the hunting of game birds, including pheasants, quail, turkey and many others, and the hunting of deer and many other animals, in addition to migratory birds, such as geese, ducks and so on.

It is estimated that in 1955, some 14,000,000 hunters will take to the fields and streams. This will be a new record and, naturally, as hunters increase, chances for hunting accidents mount.

While we do not have figures for all states, we do have them for Pennsylvania, which show that in 1954, 508 hunters were injured in hunting accidents in that state. Twenty-one hunters in the Keystone state were killed.

These are the recorded figures. No doubt, there were many other hunting accidents which were not reported, and the toll is probably greater than the figures indicate.

We have called for the practice of hunting safety rules in an earlier editorial and we will not go into that matter extensively here, other than to point out that the number of hunters has increased considerably and that it is rather difficult to call back a bullet once it has been fired and headed for someone's mid-section.

GOLDEN GLEAMS

Individuality is to be preserved and respected everywhere, as the root of everything good.
—Jean Paul Richter

We fancy men are individuals; so are pumpkins; but every pumpkin in the field goes through every point of pumpkin history.
—R. W. Emerson.

Humanity is alone real; the individual is an abstraction.
—Auguste Comte

An individual is as superb as a nation when he has the qualities which make a superb nation.
—Walt Whitman.

Whatever crushes individuality is despotism, by whatever name it may be called.
—J. S. Mills.

That cause is strong which has not a mutlitude, but one strong man behind it.
—J. R. Lowell.

Many girls are constantly trying to find a man who acts like Santa Claus. By the time they find one, he usually looks like Santa Claus.
—Hopkinton (Iowa) Leader

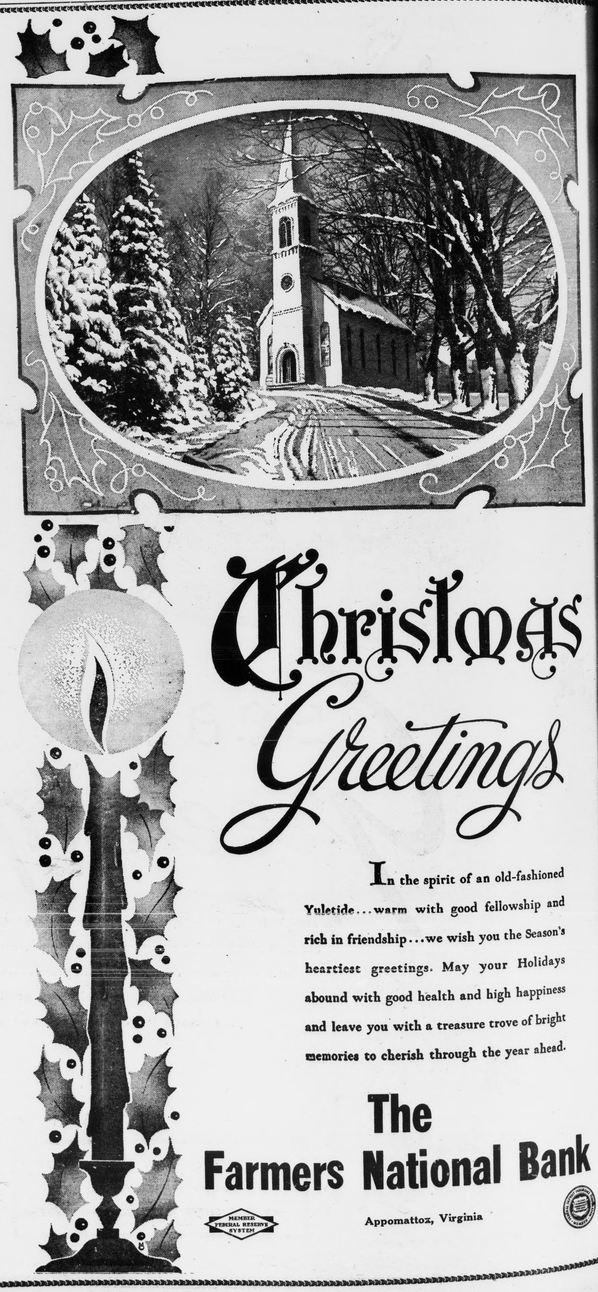
VA. YOUNG FARMERS TO GIVE AWARDS

Richmond.- Members of the Young Farmers Association of Virginia have started the selection of 1955 award winners which will culminate at Roanoke February 25, with the crowning of the state's "Outstanding Young Farmer of the Year."

Harold Turman, 30-year old Floyd County castleman, was picked last week at Galax to represent the Blue Ridge District, and district winners are being selected at Powhatan, Abingdon and Broadway.The Eastern and Southside district winners will be selected in January.

SILENT FOR 12 YEARS

Omaha, Nebr.- Two Omaha ers—one an attorney and the a doctor—shared the same for twelve years without sp a word to the eother. The stor revealed when the doctor w Dr. Frank C. Karlovsky, w court to contest the will of h yer brother, James W., who died shortly before. James to the doctor and the rest $6,000 estate to a cousin, Kalcik. It seems that Esau moved in with the brothers and a dispute over her p started the long silence.

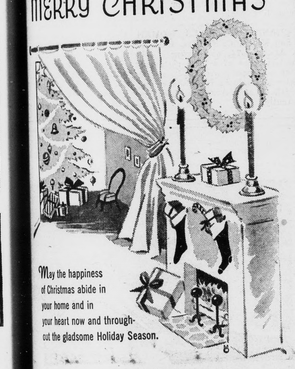


Christmas Greetings

In the spirit of an old-fashioned Yuletide...warm with good fellowship and rich in friendship...we wish you the Season's heartiest greetings. May your Holidays abound with good health and high happiness and leave you with a treasure trove of bright memories to cherish through the year ahead.

The Farmers National Bank
MEMBER FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM
Appomattox, Virginia

HERNCALL'S
Laundry & Dry Cleaners
Appomattox, Virginia
Dial 2711


MERRY CHRISTMAS
May the happiness of Christmas abide in your home and in your heart now and throughout the gladsome Holiday Season.

Haley's Store
WALLACE HALEY, Prop.
Appomattox, Virginia

Jamerson Bowling Alley
Appomattox, Virginia

WASHINGTON NOTES

FARM ASSETS UP

The farm financial situation reflects a paradox of declining prices and income on the one hand and increasing agricultural assets on the other, according to the Agriculture Department. While farm income has dropped about ten per cent this year, the value of farm real estate—the major agricultural asset — increased three per cent during the first half of the year.

SUBVERSION

The Civil Service Commission has revealed that it maintains a file, drawn from congressional hearings, newspaper reports and other sources, of some 2,000,000 persons "allegedly affiliated with some sort of subversive organization activity."

W. O. C's

President Eisenhower recently issued an order designed to make experts and consultants, serving in the Government on a temporary basis, either with or without pay, toe the line on "conflicts of interest" issues just as regular government officials do.

TWINS IN U. S.

While most European countries average one pair of twins in 90 births, in the United States there is an average of one pair in 88 births, according to the U. N. Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization. Triplets occur one in about 8,800 births, quadruplets once in about 700,000 births, and quintuplets, being very rare, about once in about 40,000,000 births.

U. S. TRAVEL

Private automobiles carried about 87.8 per cent of all United States intercity passenger travel last year, according to the Interstate Commerce Commission. Of the remaining 12.2 per cen, railroads handled 4.7 per cent, bus services 4.1 per cent, airlines 3.1 per cent and inland waterways 0.3 per cent.

LIVING STANDARD UP

In the past year there has been one of the largest of post-war increases in the standard of living of Americans, according to the Federal Reserve bulletin. "Nearly all of the increase in dollar outlays over the past year represents a gain in real consumption, as average consumer prices have changed relatively little,' the bulletin declared.

ARMY TRAINING DRIVE

In the first eight weeks of the new reserve program, the Army enlisted slightly over 4,500 six-month trainees. These predraft age youths volunteered for six months of active training, followed by 7 1-2 years of reserve liability. The goal of the Defense Department is to have 95,000 trainees by next June 30, a beginning toward an eventual pool of 2,500,000 trained men who could be called to duty in an emergency.

NATIONAL WATER POLICY

Because of rapidly growing competition in this country for the available water supply, Harry E. Polk, member of the Hoover Commission's water and power task force, urges the establishment of a national water policy. He points out: "By 1975, we are expected to have 221,000,000 people, using a per capita consumption of some 150 gallons of water a day . . Industry will use an additional 138,000,000,000 gallons in the next 25 years, so that, by 1975, the total prospective increase for both domestic and industrial use over the present will be 145 per cent. . . ."

POLIO PROGRAM

The nation-wide polio vaccination program, which began with the free vaccination of first and second-grade children, is leaving the schools for the private physician's office and the public health clinic. The free vaccinations made possible by the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis has almost ended. A $30,000,000 appropriation voted by Congress so that no child should be denied Salk vaccine for lack of funds is available to state health officers until February. Nevada is the only state that reported that there would be no polio vaccination given in public clinics. Distribtuion there will be entirely by private physicians.

MULE HAS SALES APPEAR

Hazard, Ky.- Steve Reaves wanted an automobile so he decided to trade in Nancy, his mule, on a car. He drove her into town, talked to used-car dealer Steve Talubee, and drove away with a 1949 model car. Talubee tagged Nancy with a sign he used on his cars "For Sale or Trade" — and tied her in the lot. Joe Neace walked by the lot, saw Nancy, liked her and bought her, all within a few minutes.

Europe is confident the present boom will continue.

In FASHION now

There is a demand for short-sleeved sport shirts for men nearly year around. Stripes of all types, in nearly all color combinations, are a favorite pattern of sport shirt designers. New neckline note seems to have been lifted from the ladies and features a mandarin look.

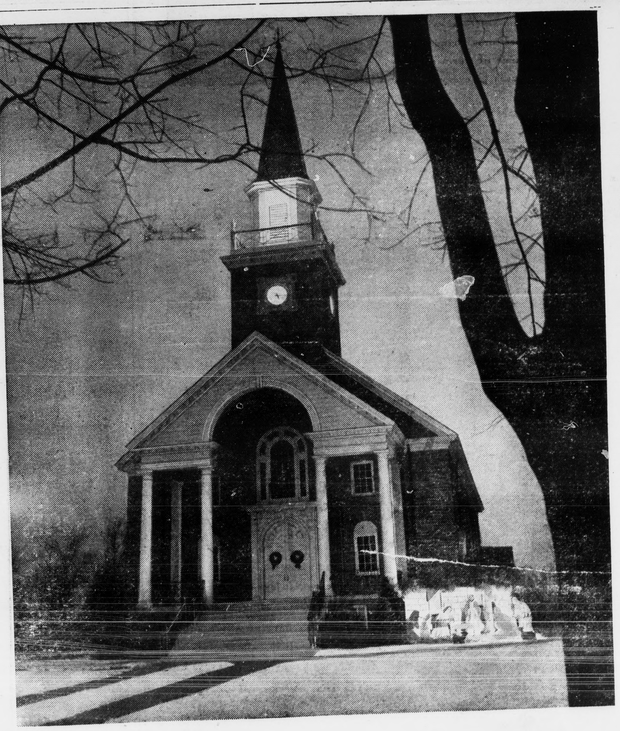
Department stores tell us that there is a bit of resistance on the part of men to this stand-up mandarin collar because most men want a shirt they can wear a jacket with. These collar designs are being named "Medic" and "Pershing" collar.

Not to be outdone by the women, with their elegant at-home clothes, the men now have "hosts" suits. These suits feature a matching cummerbund and are worn with ruffled-front cotton or silk shirts. A popular combination is to have the coat and the cummerbund of wine or dark green velvet and the pants of black velvet.

Velvet is big news in the male fashion picture. Ay a change from the familiar satin shawl collar on dinner jackets, you will be seeing a black velvet.

Lapel notches are going higher, and the squared shoulder narrower. Three buttons on the jacket are favored over two. The one-button jacket has had it.

Bermuda shorts are getting fancy and moving out of the solid fabrics into patterned ones. Blue and white checked wool ones are making a big hit. Another new style note is the Mexican wedding shirt. This shirt is adapted from those sewn by brides of the Michochoan province for their bridegroom.



Christmas Lights The World Again!

Everywhere you can see it, feel it, are strengthened by it. It cuts through world tension to bring us new hope in the life of love set forth in all its beauty by the Star of Bethleham hundreds of years ago. It dawns upon the busy family scene to remind us to take time for thoughtfulness, love and gratitude. It enters the individual heart to make mankind forgetful of his needs and mindful of the needs of others. Surely, one of our most priceless heritages is the Christmas spirit which lights the world again!

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